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ALERT

 THE PREMIER'S COUNCIL
ON THE STATUS OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES
Coming in December:
ADS Interim Report

Look for an interim draft of Alberta's Disability Strategy towards the end of December 2000. It will show all stakeholders where we are headed and the tools that will be used to generate even more specific recommendations by next June. Expect to see:

- our **vision** for the status of persons with disabilities in Alberta
- the **principles and values** that we endorse
- the **outcomes and indicators** that will be used to monitor progress and guide program improvement
- a proposal for establishing **benchmarks**—how we intend to monitor the changing status of persons with disabilities
- an **inventory and preliminary evaluation** of key provincial programs
- a detailed **audit tool** for program managers to use
- the **Disability Lens** and how it will be used
- **specific recommendations** related to full citizenship, income supports, personal supports, education and employment
- a summary of the **big systemic issues** to be addressed to improve the status of persons with disabilities.

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Results are Bottom Line

Alberta's Disability Strategy will be driven by outcomes

Outcome statements summarize the difference that we hope to see as a result of our combined initiatives to improve the status of persons with disabilities in Alberta. We can also develop "indicators" related to each outcome—what we will measure to gauge our progress towards the outcomes.

Outcomes are not picked out of thin air. They represent the visions of our diverse disability community, the objectives and policy directions of documents like *In Unison*, and principles long endorsed by the Premier's Council and Alberta's many disability organizations.

Draft outcomes are presented inside this *Status ALERT*. They are still under review and your input is welcome to make sure that we are pursuing "the right stuff."

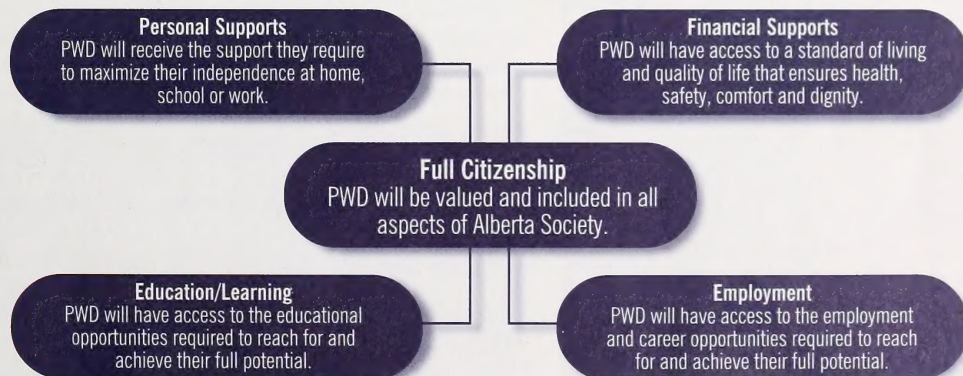
When complete, the outcomes and related indicators will be used:

- to monitor the changing status of persons with disabilities in Alberta—think of the Child Poverty Indicator Reports of the Canadian Council on Social Development (Campaign 2000)

- as a basis for the outcome and accountability work of provincial government ministries in their business plans
- by Alberta's disability organizations in their work to develop more specific performance outcomes and indicators that show the contribution that they are making to the overall effort
- as shared outcomes that will form the basis for agreements and collaborative initiatives between organizations and governments.

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The Visionary Outcomes that Drive the Alberta Disability Strategy



Draft Outcomes & Indicators:

Are We On the Right Track?

The Visionary Outcomes displayed on the front page must be made more specific and practical if they are to both guide new interventions and allow for measurement and monitoring.

In the columns to the right, each of the five “big outcomes” have been detailed into more tangible outcomes and related indicators.

The content was generated after a workshop at the University of Alberta involving more than 60 individuals, each with extensive experience in both the disability field and in evaluation and performance measurement.

We believe it's an excellent start, but we need your feedback to make sure that the approach is relevant to you and makes sense from both the consumer and provider perspectives.

- Do the five visionary outcome themes or titles cover the most important areas?
- Are the specific outcomes the ones that Albertans with disabilities would want “the system” to focus on and pursue?
- Do you have better suggestions for indicators, or what we could measure to make sure that progress is being made toward the outcome?

Contact us directly with your feedback—either Bryan Sandilands or Sherri Tanchak at the Premier's Council. Contact information is on the back of this *Status ALERT*.

Full Citizenship

Visionary Outcome:

Persons with disabilities will be valued and included in all aspects of Alberta society.

Specific Outcomes:

- Civil, constitutional and human rights will be assured for Albertans with disabilities.
- Self-determination, choice and capacity are realized through informed decision making.
- Alberta's communities will be barrier free and physically accessible—persons with disabilities will be able to access the buildings, spaces, services and programs that they need and desire.
- Persons with disabilities will have the right and opportunity to participate in and provide leadership to the public policy processes, events and associations that define their community.

Indicators:

- frequency, type and severity of Human Rights Commission complaints regarding discrimination and disability.
- % of persons with disabilities who are aware of avenues of recourse when rights have been violated
- % of persons with disabilities who are living in the community of their choice
- % of persons with disabilities who believe that they have the opportunity to participate fully in their community (in the activities of their choice)
- % of persons with disabilities who are satisfied with opportunities for participation in community-based recreation, arts, culture and active living
- % of persons with disabilities who rate the accessibility of buildings and spaces that they would like to use (in their community) as good to excellent.

Personal Supports

Visionary Outcome:

Albertans with disabilities will receive the support they require to maximize their independence at home, school or work.

Specific Outcomes:

- Daily living supports required by persons with disabilities for independent community living will be available and affordable.
- Persons with disabilities will have choice and the right to self-determination related both to the type of support required and how the support will be provided.
- Housing and transportation options appropriate to the needs of persons with disabilities will be available in Alberta communities.
- Caregiving families and volunteers will receive the support they need to continue to provide effective and appropriate care.

Indicators:

- % of persons requiring technical aids, devices or special equipment that agree they have been able to access appropriate disability supports
- % of persons requiring attendant support that agree that they have been able to access appropriate and affordable support
- % of persons requiring help with housework and household chores that agree they have been able to access appropriate and affordable support
- % of persons with disabilities who believe that they have an appropriate level of choice regarding required supports and providers
- % of persons with disabilities who believe they have access to housing options appropriate to their disability
- % of persons with disabilities who believe they have access to transportation options appropriate to their disability
- % of family caregivers who agree that they receive the training and back-up support they need to provide effective and sustainable care.

Financial Supports

Visionary Outcome:

Albertans with disabilities will have access to a standard of living and quality of life that ensures health, safety, comfort and dignity.

Specific Outcomes:

- Persons with disabilities will have financial security sufficient to meet daily living needs.
- Funding policies for persons with disabilities will reflect the real cost of living with a disability.
- The funding system will treat persons with disabilities with respect.
- Funding programs will not be a disincentive to employment options.

Indicators:

- % of persons with disabilities considered to be living on low incomes according to the Market Basket Measure (MBM)
- % of persons with disabilities living below Statistics Canada "low income cutoff"
- % of persons with disabilities who perceive they have the financial resources to meet their needs (food, shelter, clothing, community participation)
- % of persons with disabilities who are paying 30% or more of their income to rent
- % of persons with disabilities and their families who believe that funding levels reflect the actual cost of living with a disability
- % of persons with disabilities who feel that they have involvement and control over their financial decision-making
- % of persons with disabilities who agree that providers/managers of financial assistance programs treat them with respect.

Education & Learning

Visionary Outcome:

Albertans with disabilities will have access to the educational opportunities required to reach for and achieve their full potential.

Specific Outcomes:

- Persons with disabilities will have the support they need to participate in education at all levels and throughout life.
- Persons with disabilities will enjoy choice and self-determination in planning for their primary, secondary, post-secondary and life-long education needs.
- Alberta's education system will be responsive to the special needs of persons with disabilities.

Indicators:

- % of persons with disabilities, families and caregivers who are satisfied with available options
 - for special education support
 - for adaptive technology
 - for related financial assistance
 - for related transportation
- % of persons with disabilities who believe they have adequate information about available education options
- % of persons with disabilities who believe they have the opportunity to choose from available education options
- % of persons with disabilities of different ages engaged in education compared to general population norms
- comparison of education levels of persons with disabilities with general population norms.

Employment

Visionary Outcome:

Albertans with disabilities will have access to the employment and career opportunities required to reach for and achieve their full potential.

Specific Outcomes:

- Persons with disabilities will have choices regarding employment options.
- Persons with disabilities will have the support they require to prepare for employment.
- Persons with disabilities will have the support required to access a range of employment opportunities and to progress along a chosen career path.
- Persons with disabilities will be valued members of Alberta's workforce.

Indicators:

- % of persons with disabilities who believe they have had the support required to become "employment ready"
- % of persons with disabilities who agree they have been able to access the supports necessary to access employment opportunities
- % of persons with disabilities who believe they have equitable access to the employment opportunities they desire and are qualified for
- % of persons with disabilities who believe that they have equitable career advancement opportunities in the workforce
- comparison of workforce participation and unemployment rates for persons with disabilities and the general population
- comparison of salaries and wages for persons with disabilities and others
- comparison of % of persons with disabilities in supervisory and managerial positions with workplace norms.

Our intent is to improve policies, programs and services so that the VISIONARY OUTCOMES become ALBERTA'S REALITY...the indicators will be used to monitor our progress.

ADS: Next Steps

The Premier's Council is facilitating and coordinating the activity required to develop Alberta's Disability Strategy. During the Fall, leading up to publication of our Interim Report, we will concentrate our efforts in the following areas.

Refining the Outcome Approach

The outcomes and indicators contained in this *Status ALERT* will be sent out to the 60 participants that helped develop the statements for review.

We are also hoping that many of our 6000 readers will respond with constructive criticism and advice.

An Outcome Task Force will be appointed and will work on finalization, determining measurement tools, and identifying who is best positioned to do the monitoring work.

Inventory and Evaluation

We have developed an evaluation tool that facilitates review of each of Alberta's disability programs in light of our vision, principles and outcomes.

At least 20 provincial government programs will be looked at in October and November to identify issues and challenges requiring further work. These will be summarized in the Interim Report and investigated more thoroughly early in 2001.

The Disability Lens

This tool helps decision-makers look at any and all policy or program proposals through the eyes

of persons with disabilities. We are building on work done throughout the diversity community: disability, cultural and gender. A draft of this tool will be ready for review in the Interim Report.

Workshops to Generate Specific Recommendations

The Premier's Council has five working committees, each addressing one of the visionary outcomes on the front page of this issue. Many strategies and action requests have been generated.

During October and November, each of these committees will host two workshops designed to bring together those who are also reviewing the outcome area (e.g., employment, education, supports). We will be inviting representatives from the Alberta Disabilities Forum, the Employabilities Council, the Alberta Committee of Citizens with Disabilities, Champions of Workplace Diversity, government representatives, and others to ensure that the best recent thinking on what needs to be changed is present.

We will compare notes and generate common recommendations to be included in the Interim Report.

Key Messages



Albertans with disabilities **need support** to reach a level playing field where they can demonstrate their full potential as contributing citizens. The Premier's Council and **Alberta's Disability Strategy** will champion the provision of basic disability supports for persons with disabilities.

Our federal and provincial governments have endorsed the concept of **full citizenship** for persons with disabilities—but we are nowhere near this target. The Alberta Disability Strategy process is the ideal opportunity to move forward. We must see every policy, program and service through a **disability lens**. Basic disability supports are just the beginning of our commitment to equal access and full participation.

Over **1 in 6** (or 17%) of Albertans live with a disability. We simply cannot afford to exclude or handicap them as our provincial future unfolds—socially, economically or politically. Full participation, full citizenship makes sense—it's the right thing to do. The mission of the Premier's Council is "to champion significant improvement in the status of persons with disabilities"—you too can be a champion!

There are over 1000 organizations in Alberta committed to helping persons with disabilities. Only a handful are focused on **systemic change** that improves the status of all persons with disabilities—and the Premier's Council is the only one with a legislated mandate to do so. The Alberta Disability Strategy presents the best opportunity ever to speak with a **common voice** and move forward together.

Contact Us...

...if you want to be involved or receive more information:

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